

EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT

An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it MUST be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in a telephone interview with Charles Rodman on 21 October 2009.

The application has been amended as follows:

Please replace the abstract with the following:

ABSTRACT

A melting apparatus facilitates the melting of pieces of solid metal in a bath of molten metal (10). The melting apparatus comprises a device (18) having a lower portion (22), an upper portion (20), and a body portion (24) extending therebetween. Solid metal is introduced into the device (18) through the upper portion (20). A flow inducer, such as an impeller (28) induces flow of molten metal through the device (18). Flow straighteners, such as baffles (38) encourage axial flow of molten metal through the device (18). The body portion (24) is formed with a plurality of apertures (36) therein and the device (18) is arranged, in use, with the lower portion (22) and the plurality of apertures (36) positioned within the bath (10) and the upper portion (20) positioned above the upper surface (12) and the molten metal bath (10). --

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to TIMA M. MCGUTHRY-BANKS whose telephone number is (571)272-2744. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 8:30 am - 5:00 pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Roy King can be reached on (571) 272-1244. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/George Wyszomierski/
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 1793

/T. M. M./
Examiner, Art Unit 1793
5 November 2009